

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PANAMA 03370 151915Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 VO-05 CA-01 HA-05 H-01 L-03
CIAE-00 FBIE-00 INSE-00 NSAE-00 /042 W
-----106526 151921Z /73

R 151901Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7012
INFO USINT HAVANA
AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY MEXICO

C O N F I D E N T I A L PANAMA 03370

DEPT PLEASE HOLD IN CA FOR H. QUINN

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: CVIS, SHUM, SREF, CU, US, PN
SUBJECT: EXIT ROUTES FOR CUBAN REFUGEES

REF: A. STATE 117589, B. STATE 68192,
C. STATE 47802, D. PANAMA 1468, E. PANAMA 1931,
F. PANAMA 2032, G. PANAMA 3099

1. REGRET DELAY REPLYING REF B. IT DID NOT HAVE CVIS TAGS
AND WAS NOT ROUTED TO CONSULAR SECTION. REF C WAS NOT SENT
PANAMA. REQUEST COPY REF C AND 76 STATE A-2443. REF D, E
AND F ARE OUT MOST RECENT CLEARANCE REQUESTS FOR CUBAN
APPLICANTS AND REF G IS RESPONSE TO RECENT CONGRESSIONAL
INQUIRY FROM SENATOR CULVER ON THIS SUBJECT. NOTAL FOR ALL
REFERENCES, EXCEPT REF B.

2. OBVIOUSLY, STATUS OF CUBAN VISA APPLICANTS IN PANAMA IS
GENERATING MUCH INTEREST. WE FEEL THAT THE PROBLEM IS
GOING TO CONTINUE AND GET LARGER UNLESS APPLICANT CAN BE
PERSUADED TO APPLY IN HAVANA.

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3. THE THREE APPLICANTS WHO RECEIVED VISAS HERE IN MARCH
ARRIVED WITH THE IMPRESSION THAT VISAS HAD TO BE OBTAINED
COVERTLY. ALL STATED THAT THEY FELT U.S. INTERESTS SECTION
IN HAVANA ONLY GRANTED CUBAN DIPLOMATIC VISAS. THEY ALSO
FEARED THAT THEY WOULD FACE OBSTACLES LEAVING CUBA IF THEY
WERE SEEN APPROACHING THE U.S. MISSION. ONLY ONE OF THE

APPLICANTS - A FORMER POLITICAL PRISONER - SEEMED TO HAVE A REALISTIC BASIS FOR THIS FEAR. IN THE CASE WHICH GENERATED THE CONGRESSIONAL, WE INSTRUCTED MRS. CARBAJAL THROUGH HER SISTER TO APPLY IN HAVANA, AND SHE HAS NOT COME TO OUR OFFICE.

4. MOST CUBANS WHO APPLY IN PANAMA ARE OBVIOUS IMMIGRANTS EVEN THOUGH THEY INITIALLY APPLY FOR NIV'S. WHEN THEY INITIATE IMMIGRANT PROCEDURES, WE INSTRUCT THEM TO HAVE THEIR RELATIVES FILE VISA PETITIONS WITH A REQUEST FOR TELEGRAPHIC NOTIFICATION OF APPROVAL, AND WE INITIATE SECURITY CHECKS BY TELEGRAM. SINCE 9FAM APP. B LISTS CIVIL DOCUMENTS AS UNAVAILABLE, WE WAIVE DOCUMENTARY REQUIREMENTS. THE ONLY DOCUMENTS REQUIRED FOR THE VISAS ARE THEN THE TWO TELEGRAMS WHICH WILL ARRIVE AT OUR OFFICE, SO THE APPLICANT (AND HIS RELATIVES) BEGIN DAILY VISITS TO INQUIRE IF THE TELEGRAMS WERE RECEIVED. ALTHOUGH WE ASSURE THEM THAT WE WILL SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT AND CONTACT THEM AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, THE APPLICANTS BEGIN FINDING VARIOUS WAYS TO APPLY POLITICAL PRESSURE TO 'SPEED UP THE PROCESSING'.

5. APPLICANTS HAVE STATED THAT MANY OF THE DOCUMENTS REQUIRED FOR THE VISA CAN BE OBTAINED BUT THAT THEY WERE LEFT IN CUBA WHEN THEY DEPARTED. ALTHOUGH CIVIL DOCUMENTS WERE PREVIOUSLY CONFISCATED UPON DEPARTURE FROM CUBA, THEY STATE THAT SUCH SEARCHES NO LONGER ARE ROUTINE. MAIL
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SERVICE IS SLOW, BUT IT APPEARS THAT CIVIL DOCUMENTS CAN NOW BE REQUESTED BY MAIL FROM OUTSIDE CUBA.

6. IN FUTURE IMMIGRANT CASES, POST PLANS TO ASK CUBANS TO DEMONSTRATE THAT THEY HAVE ATTEMPTED TO OBTAIN CIVIL DOCUMENTS REQUIRED FOR A VISA, AND THAT THEY HAVE WAITED A REASONABLE LENGTH OF TIME (30 DAYS) FOR THE DOCUMENTS TO BE SENT. THIS WILL ALLOW TIME FOR CLEARANCES, AND IT SEEMS A REASONABLE CONDITION FOR WAIVING CIVIL DOCUMENTS.

7. AMEMBASSY PANAMA HAS RECEIVED ASSURANCES FROM ALL APPLICANTS THAT THEY WILL TELL THEIR FRIENDS AND RELATIVES TO GO TO THE U.S. INTERESTS SECTION TO OBTAIN THEIR VISAS. WE ARE ENCOURAGED THAT MRS. CARBAJAL APPARENTLY DID SO AND GOT HER VISA IN HAVANA PRIOR TO DEPARTURE.

8. DELAYS IN OBTAINING CLEARANCES WILL CONTINUE TO BE A PROBLEM IN NIV CASES, BUT WE WILL INFORM APPLICANTS DURING THEIR INITIAL INTERVIEW THAT A ONE-MONTH DELAY IS ANTICIPATED, AND WE WILL ASSIST THEM IN EXTENDING THEIR 30-DAY PANAMANIAN TOURIST VISA IF IT IS NECESSARY. WE WILL OF COURSE MAKE IT CLEAR THAT THEY WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN

DELAYED IN PANAMA IF THEY HAD TAKEN TIME TO GET THEIR VISAS
IN HAVANA, JORDEN

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